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(54) Game machines

(57) A game machine comprises a card reader adapted to read a card inserted through slot 2, a game of chance and/or skill activated by the card reader, and a dispenser, adapted to dispense a voucher through slot 5, which is activated on successful completion of the game of chance and/or skill.

Fig. 1.

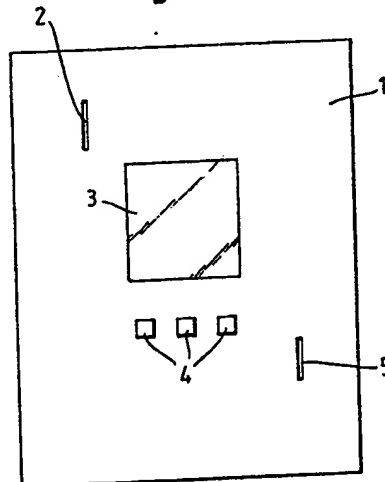


Fig. 1.

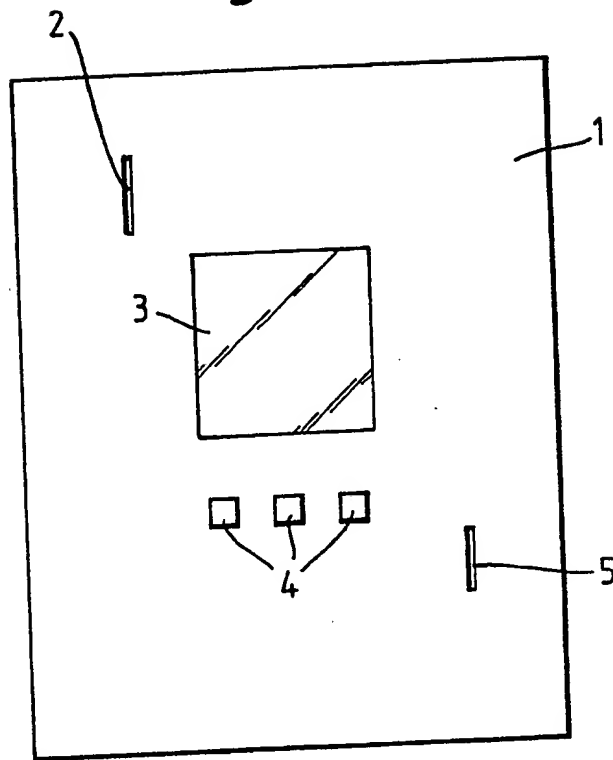
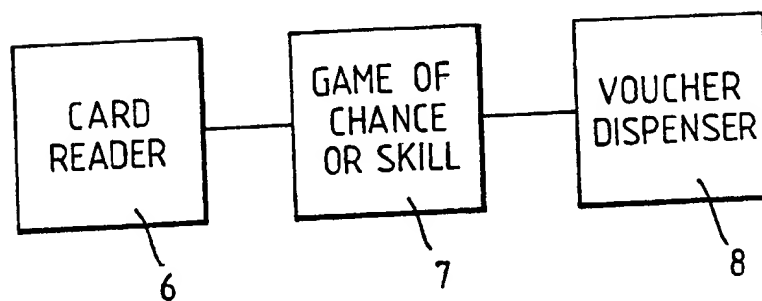


Fig. 2.



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DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

Improvements in or relating to a game machine

THIS INVENTION relates to a game machine. In this specification the term game machine is used in a broad manner to mean a machine that is similar to an amusement-with-prize machine, but, as will become clear from the following description, a machine in accordance with the present invention need not fall within the legal definition of an amusement-with-prizes machines.

According to this invention there is provided a game machine, said machine comprising a card reader adapted to read and identify a card, a game of and/or skill activated by the card reader, and a dispenser, adapted to dispense a voucher, the dispenser being activated on successful completion of the game of chance or skill.

Preferably the card reader is adapted to read a card with a magnetic stripe, or is adapted to read a perforated card.

Conveniently the card reader is adapted to activate the game of chance and/or skill only if the card inserted therein has not been inserted therein previously during a predetermined period of time.

Preferably the card reader is adapted to store, in a memory, the identify of each card presented to the card reader, and is adapted to compare the identity of each card read with the identity of cards stored in the memory, the card reader activating the

game of chance and/or skill when the identity of the card
inserted in the card reader is not the same as the
identity of a card stored in the memory, the identity of
cards stored in the memory being erased after a predet-
5 ermined period of time.

Alternatively the card reader is adapted to
write on to the card the date on which the card is read,
and is adapted to read from the card the date on which
10 the card was last read in order to determine if the pre-
determined period of time has elapsed.

Conveniently the game of chance and/or skill in-
corporates a monitor screen.

15 Preferably the monitor screen is adapted to
display, when the machine is not in use, an "attract
mode" and/or advertisements.

20 Conveniently the voucher dispenser is adapted
to dispense pre-printed vouchers.

Alternatively the voucher dispenser incorp-
orates a printer adapted to print a voucher which is to
25 be dispensed.

Preferably the face value of each voucher
disposed is dependent upon the result of the game of
chance or skill.

30 In order that the invention may be more
readily understood, and so that further features thereof
may be appreciated, the invention will now be described,
by way of example, with reference to the accompanying
35 drawing in which:

FIGURE 1 is a schematic view of one embodiment of a game machine in accordance with the invention, and

FIGURE 2 is a block diagram of the machine of Figure 1.

Referring initially to the drawings a game machine in accordance with the invention comprises a housing 1. The housing 1 defines a slot 2 into which a predetermined card may be inserted. It is envisaged that the card may be a card incorporating a magnetic strip, or a card incorporating punched holes, or may be some other card that can be read by a card reader located behind the slot 2.

The described machine includes means to enable a game of chance or skill to be played, or a game involving both chance and skill. In the described embodiment these means comprise a monitor screen 3 and a plurality of control buttons 4. However it is to be realised that in alternative embodiments of machine in accordance with the invention alternative means may be provided such as, for example, the reels of a conventional "fruit" machine, representing a game of chance, or some type of pin-ball machine, representing a game of skill.

The described machine also is provided with a further slot 5 through which vouchers or the like may be dispensed. The vouchers to be dispensed will be of paper or card, printed appropriately.

FIGURE 2 is a block diagram of the machine illustrated in Figure 1, and it can be seen that essentially the machine comprises a card reader 6 which is adapted to activate the game of chance and/or skill 7, successful completion of which activates the voucher dispenser 8.

The card reader 6 is adapted to read and identify a card inserted through the slot 2. The card reader may be programmed to enable the game of chance and/or skill only a predetermined number of times during a predetermined period for each particular card, such as once each day or once each week. This may be accomplished by the card reader being provided with a memory, the card reader recording in the memory the identity of each card as it is read, the card reader then comparing the identity of each card inserted in the slot 2 with all cards previously read during the preceding seven days for example and only accepting cards which have not been previously inserted in the machine during that period of time. The memory will be errased appropriately from time-time-time. Alternatively, the card reader may be adapted to write back on to the card the date of use, the card reader then being adapted to read the date of last use of the card and only to accept cards which have, for example not been used during the preceding seven days.

When the card reader has accepted a card the game of chance or skill will be activated. As has been mentioned the game of chance may be a "fruit-machine" game or a game of skill such as a pin-ball game but it preferred that the game of chance or skill is carried out using a monitor screen 3. Thus the game of chance and/or skill may comprise a quiz-type game or some other game that can be played utilising the monitor screen.

If the game of chance or skill is successfully completed a voucher dispenser 8 is activated which dispenses a voucher through the slot 5. The voucher dispenser may merely dispense vouchers from a pre-printed set of vouchers, or may print a voucher to be dispensed through the slot 5. The face value of the voucher, may be determined by the "score" achieved by a

player in the game of chance and/or skill.

5 At this stage it is to be understood that it
is intended that the vouchers dispensed by the voucher
dispenser 8 are "money-off" vouchers for use in
10 purchasing certain products. At the present point in
time high costs are incurred by advertising agencies in
the distribution of such vouchers. It is thus thought
possible that the machine in accordance with the inven-
15 tion may be installed at a suitable location, for
example in a super-market or in a shopping precinct.
Each home in the vicinity of the super-market or
shopping precinct may be provided with a card to be used
in activating the machine. The card may be used many
20 times, for example once a day, or once a week, as out-
lined above. Whenever the card is used, if the person
using the card can successfully complete the game of
chance and/or skill, a voucher is dispensed by the
voucher dispenser 8 through the slot 5. As mentioned,
the face value of the voucher may depend upon the result
of the game of chance and/or skill.

25 The advantage of having machine which incorp-
orates a monitor 3 is that, when the machine is not
actually being used, the machine may operate in an
"attract mode" displaying information on the monitor
attracting people to utilise the machine. The monitor
may also display advertisements drawing attention to
various promotions in the particular super-market or
30 shopping precinct, or advertising specific goods.

35 Whilst one embodiment of the invention has
been described it is to be understood that various mod-
ifications may be effected without departing from the
scope of the invention.

CLAIMS:

1. A game machine, said machine comprising a card reader adapted to read and identify a card, a game of chance and/or skill activated by the card reader, and a dispenser, adapted to dispense a voucher, the dispenser being activated on successful completion of the game of chance or skill.
2. A game machine according to claim 1 wherein the card reader is adapted to read a card with a magnetic stripe.
3. A game machine according to claim 2 wherein the card reader is adapted to read a perforated card.
4. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the card reader is adapted to activate the game of chance or skill only if the card inserted therein has not been inserted therein previously during a predetermined period of time.
5. A machine according to claim 4 wherein the card reader is adapted to store, in a memory, the identify of each card presented to the card reader, and is adapted to compare the identity of each card read with the identity of cards stored in the memory, the card reader activating the game of chance and/or skill when the identity of the card inserted in the card reader is not the same as the identity of a card stored in the memory, the identity of cards stored in the memory being erased after a predetermined period of time.
6. A game machine according to claim 4 wherein the card reader is adapted to write on to the card the date on which the card is read, and is adapted to read from the card the date on which the card was last read

in order to determine if the predetermined period of time has elapsed.

5 7. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the game of chance and/or skill incorporates a monitor screen.

10 8. A game according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the monitor screen is adapted to display, when the machine is not in use, an "attract mode" and/or advertisements.

15 9. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the voucher dispenser is adapted to dispense pre-printed vouchers.

20 10. A game machine according to any one of claims 1 to 8 wherein the voucher dispenser incorporates a printer adapted to print a voucher which is to be dispensed.

25 11. A game machine according to claim 9 or 10 wherein the face value of each voucher disposed is dependent upon the result of the game of chance or skill.

30 12. A game machine substantially as herein described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.

13. Any novel feature or combination of features disclosed herein.

CLAIMS:

1. A game machine, said machine comprising a card reader adapted to read and identify a card, a game of chance and/or skill activated by the card reader, and a dispenser, adapted to dispense a voucher, the dispenser being activated on successful completion of the game of chance or skill, the face value of each voucher dispensed being dependent upon the result of the game of chance or skill.
2. A game machine according to claim 1 wherein the card reader is adapted to read a card with a magnetic stripe.
3. A game machine according to claim 2 wherein the card reader is adapted to read a perforated card.
4. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the card reader is adapted to activate the game of chance or skill only if the card inserted therein has not been inserted therein previously during a predetermined period of time.
5. A machine according to claim 4 wherein the card reader is adapted to store, in a memory, the identify of each card presented to the card reader, and is adapted to compare the identity of each card read with the identity of cards stored in the memory, the card reader activating the game of chance and/or skill when the identity of the card inserted in the card reader is not the same as the identity of a card stored in the memory, the identity of cards stored in the memory being erased after a predetermined period of time.
6. A game machine according to claim 4 wherein the card reader is adapted to write on to the card the

date on which the card is read, and is adapted to read from the card the date on which the card was last read in order to determine if the predetermined period of time has elapsed.

5

7. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the game of chance and/or skill incorporates a monitor screen.

10 8. A game according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the monitor screen is adapted to display, when the machine is not in use, an "attract mode" and/or advertisements.

15 9. A game machine according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the voucher dispenser is adapted to dispense pre-printed vouchers.

20 10. A game machine according to any one of claims 1 to 8 wherein the voucher dispenser incorporates a printer adapted to print a voucher which is to be dispensed.

25 11. A game machine substantially as herein described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.

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